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City Manager

CITY OF WORCESTER

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June 15, 2010

TO THE WORCESTER CITY COUNCIL

COUNCILORS:

I respectfully submit my self-evaluation to your Honorable Body for the body of work and accomplishments of my Administration on behalf of this City Council and community for Fiscal Year 2010.

It has been an honor and great pleasure to serve this City Council and this community for the last six years. I am proud of our great city and all that we have achieved as a collective, and I am grateful to my employees for their hard work and tireless efforts to preserve and enhance our residents' quality of life. It is because of their leadership, knowledge and abilities that we have been able to maintain our commitments and meet the expectations of our citizens under extremely challenging circumstances.

In spite of these challenges, we have stayed true to the principles of our long-term Five Point Financial Plan. We have focused on the core mission of government, made decisions today that we can afford tomorrow, mitigated skyrocketing fixed cost growth, limited our overall borrowing and built-up our "rainy day" reserves. We have worked hard to achieve our goals and I am proud of the significant and historic milestones we have accomplished even in the midst of one of our nation's worst economic climates.

These achievements are the culmination of hard work and perseverance, strategic private/public partnerships, leadership and engagement at all levels of government, and multi-departmental cooperation and collaboration. Though I have a strong desire to see things happen quickly, I have come to accept—reluctantly—that bold gestures take time. Each step, each milestone is a building block towards a successful conclusion.

My self-evaluation identifies our goals and accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2010, to include key initiatives I set last June for my Administration and me and those set by City Council Standing Committees throughout the year. They represent the priorities as detailed by and through the leadership and guidance of City Council. The overarching goals remain the same and include: expanding our commercial tax base, stabilizing and strengthening our neighborhoods, enhancing public safety and emergency management, investing in public infrastructure and building a strategic public health model.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank each member of my Cabinet for their leadership and commitment to public service—Assistant City Manager Julie Jacobson, DPWP Commissioner Robert Moylan, City Solicitor David Moore, Fire Chief Gerard Dio,



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Police Chief Gary Gemme, Human Resources Director Kathleen Johnson, Division of Inspectional Services Acting Commissioner John Kelly, Director of Emergency Management David Clemons, and Chief Financial Officer Thomas Zidelis. I would also be remiss if I did not thank all of our City team for a job well done, under the pressure of limited resources, unfunded mandates, emergency conditions and high expectations. Time after time, and consistently, rising to the challenges.

My Administration worked closely with our elected officials for support, guidance and complimentary successes. I must express my gratitude to the Worcester City Council, the Patrick-Murray Administration, our Lieutenant Governor, our Statehouse Delegation, our Congressman James P. McGovern and our Senators. I'd also like to thank all members of the Boards and Commissions, who volunteer their time to be part of the process, as well as my colleagues at the Worcester Public Schools.

Fiscal Year 2010 Accomplishments

Fiscal Discipline and Stewardship

Adapted to Dramatic Reductions in State Aid and a Combined Loss of Nearly \$25 M in Annual, Recurring Revenue

We maintained fiscal discipline to produce an 18-month balanced budget to adapt to the dramatic reductions in State Aid and other revenues. We addressed the real and immediate impacts of the economic crisis faced by the Commonwealth and the Nation, while ensuring core municipal services continued to be provided. We lived within our means through restructuring, redeployments, and reforms and made decisions that kept us stable, with signs of true economic growth.

Maintained Bond Ratings

Three bond rating agencies—Moody's Investor Services, Fitch Ratings, and Standard and Poor's—conducted an independent, top-to-bottom review of our core services, finances, practices, reforms, community stability, tax base, jobs, housing, and more. The ratings are viewed by investors, developers, lenders, businesses, potential residents and citizens as an independent assessment of the health, stability, vibrancy and vitality of our City and its government.

All three agencies recognized our hard work and commitment to reform and to our Five Point Financial Plan and maintained our City's Bond Ratings at A3, A and A-, respectively. It is important to note that these stable ratings were maintained in the context of a global, national and regional economic crisis, the collapse of the national and the regional housing markets, the dramatic reduction of our State aid and other negative forces at work.

Secured \$33 Million in Federal, State and Private Grants Toward Critical Programs to Address Public Safety, Housing, Youth Employment, Workforce Development and Homelessness

We continue to look for grant opportunities to secure funding to support the continuation of important programs. Through the work of the Budget/Grants Office, we have increased our grant funding requests by 68%. Upon receipt, these funds were used to support the following programs in the following areas: Youth Jobs; Workforce

Development; Lead Abatement Hazard Program; Neighborhood Stabilization Program; Police and Fire Services; Green Energy Projects; Fair Housing; and Regional Emergency Preparedness.

Achieved Significant Savings By Implementing Health Insurance Reforms, Performing Health Plan Audit and Initiating a Competitive Bid Process to Enhance Life Insurance/ Disability Benefits

The implementation of new plan designs (increased health insurance contribution) and increased co-payments for our employee groups that transitioned to these changes over FY2010 resulted in \$3 million in avoided costs (cost savings). These changes align more closely with industry standards. In addition, we completed a dependent audit to confirm the total eligible population of dependents. Approximately 97.2% were confirmed eligible; the remaining 2.8% were removed, resulting in a projected savings of \$1 million. Lastly, we initiated a review and competitive bid process for life insurance, disability insurance and voluntary benefits to enhance plan benefits and reduce employee costs. The savings achieved from our selection exceeded 22%.

Instituted a Premium Holiday in Fiscal Year 2010 for Employees As a Result of Collective Health Care Reforms

The implementation of health insurance reforms resulted in savings that we passed along to all employees and retirees, while continuing to provide affordable, quality health insurance coverage. We were also able to certify \$1.5 million dollars in surplus in the Health Care Trust to redirect to services to mitigate the depth of cuts required due to State Aid reductions. These collective efforts have stabilized and preserved both City services and City positions, have improved the stability of the Health Insurance Trust Fund and have produced historically low premium increases for the upcoming plan year. As a result, we were able to institute a second premium holiday for employees and retirees in Fiscal Year 2010.

Successfully Negotiated A Historic Agreement between the City and Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) to Effectuate the Transfer of Ownership for the Worcester Regional Airport (WRA) to Massport

This historic agreement absolves the City of all debts, covenants and grant assurances (past, present and future) relative to the operations of the airport while recognizing the resources the City has dedicated to the airport over time. The agreement allows the City the flexibility to apply these proceeds – the value to the City of as much as \$17 million in cash payments and permanent land transfers – to be in the best interest of the community.

In addition, the transfer of the WRA to MassPort creates a recurring, re-directed City revenue stream of \$1.2 million (as inflation adjusted in future years). This is the annual taxpayer support paid toward the operational and debt service costs for WRA that will no longer be required after July 1, 2010. These dollars were re-directed in the FY2011 Budget Recommendation to stabilize core, municipal services, putting these dollars to work for our citizens in the fields of public safety, public works and others.

Secured Collective Bargaining Contract with Patrolmen

The City, negotiating in good-faith, entered into a collective bargaining agreement with New England Police Benevolent Association, Local 911 (Police). This agreement included a fair and balanced wage and benefit structure, 0% salary increase and employee health insurance reforms (increases to 75/25 health insurance premium contributions and co-pay changes). It also addressed the legacy of the Quinn Bill in a fiscally sound and responsible manner in light of the State's near elimination of their 50% reimbursement of annual program costs and their changes to the law itself.

Economic Growth and Expansion

CitySquare – Tenancy for Building H Secured, Demolition of Former Mall to Begin and Construction of Building H to Begin

This multi-million construction project, the largest in the Commonwealth outside of Boston, has reached historic milestones this year. Among the most significant was the signing of a 17-year lease agreement by Unum Group with CitySquare II Development LLC for occupancy by its 700+ employees in a soon-to-be-constructed 200,000-square-foot building on Foster Street and the redevelopment of the adjacent 860-car parking garage. Even though this was a private transaction, the sheer magnitude and complexity of all the moving parts required significant City involvement and cooperation. This lease signing was historic in nature in that it will set the stage for demolition and construction of Building H to begin this month. CitySquare II LLC has acquired all the development parcels and we have agreed to assign the GDA to this entity. The checks and balances of the GDA are now under evaluation and upon their satisfaction; we will be able to release the \$35 M in public financing to build the streets and infrastructure. Upon commencement, the construction of Building H will take approximately 24 months will result in up to \$85 M in private investment (including design, construction and fit-out of new building) and the creation of more than 300 construction jobs over the period.

CSX Corporation – Expansion of Commuter Rail Addressed, \$100 M Economic Development Project Proposed with an Addition of over \$23 Million Dollars in Community/ Neighborhood Benefits

After lengthy negotiations, the City, the Commonwealth and CSX Corporation reached a landmark agreement to expand CSX operations in Worcester as part of an economic development project to expand commuter and freight rail options to the City. The agreement will result in 20-25 additional daily commuter rail/passenger trains to and from Boston. In addition, CSX will modernize and expand its intermodal freight rail in Worcester with an investment of approximately \$100 M. Upon City Council approval, the construction of the facility will generate 400 jobs over the next 24 months, and upon operation, the facility will generate up to \$700,000 in net new real estate and personal property tax revenue for the City. Operation of the new terminal is planned for late 2012 pending necessary City Council and various permit approvals.

UMass Medical School (UMMS) – Campus Expansion and Construction of a Premiere Research and Development Center (Sherman Center)

Under the leadership and partnership of UMMS Chancellor Michael Collins, the medical school continues to grow. The Advanced Center for Clinical Education and Science, a

258,000-square-foot, \$95 M state-of-the-art facility, opens this summer. In Fiscal Year 2010, the medical school broke ground on the Sherman Center, a 500,000-square-foot, \$405 M center for cellular and gene research. This expansion will generate 3,500 construction jobs and 900 permanent jobs once operational, while solidifying Worcester's prestige as a hub for life sciences research and development.

Worcester Crossing – Reuse of Former Steel Factory; Retail Construction

Worcester Crossing is one more indication that the private market recognizes the value of a Worcester investment. This \$50+ million retail complex, on 44 acres, has resulted in the redevelopment of the former U.S. Steel manufacturing site. Upon full build-out, the new development will create 700 jobs and generate approximately \$1.4 million in annual real estate taxes. The first of several retailers and restaurants – WalMart Supercenter – opened its door in May 2010. Wal-Mart alone created 250 primarily full-time positions. It is anticipated that other restaurants, shops, a bank and a fitness center will open this year. The new shopping center will attract shoppers from other communities to Worcester. Working in partnership with the developer, the City was instrumental in encouraging a green energy build (inclusive of wind turbines). The development will also accommodate the Blackstone River Valley Bikepath.

Business Retention and Expansion

UNUM Group Expansion Relocation

The City, working in partnership with our State partners, retained Unum Group in the downtown CitySquare development project. The company will invest approximately \$15-\$25 million in the design and the tenant fit-out of the new state-of-the-art 200,000-square-foot office building; will retain 700 jobs, and will create 50 net new jobs.

Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) Expansion

The College's expansion in the downtown continues, with a total investment of \$85 million into the rehabilitation and renovation of primarily vacant buildings. The College, which was the first tax-exempt institution to make a P.I.L.O.T. to City, transformed 19 and 40 Foster Streets—approximately 180,000 square feet of decaying warehouse and office space—into first-class academic and student space in our downtown, and created about \$40 million annual economic spin-off. The College also announced plans to purchase the vacant Crowne Plaza Hotel and rehabilitate the property into housing and lab space to accommodate the addition of new degree programs. This expansion will bring the College's total job creation to 200 and total student population to 1,000 by next year, with an expectation that their enrollment will double within 10 years as a result of the additional degree programs.

Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics Expansion and Relocation

Saint-Gobain will celebrate 125 years in the City this month; and the company continues to grow. The manufacturer embarked on a \$32 million two-phase expansion and after a site search, chose to relocate and expand its operation on Plantation Street. The expansion resulted in the creation of 40+ new jobs.

Beechwood Hotel Expansion

The hotelier invested \$17 million into the renovation of its building. The 32,000-square-foot expansion over the next eight (8) years will include more office space, a restaurant, a spa and 27 additional hotel rooms. The hotel will retain 79 full- and part-time positions and will create at least 21 new, permanent full-time positions. The City worked with the Beechwood Hotel in providing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement is a two-phased plan over a 15-year period. In addition, the City's Workforce Development Division assisted in identifying employees.

Cryogenic Institute Expansion and Relocation

The City worked with Cryogenic Institute of New England, Inc. to assist in the expansion of its operations to 78 Chilmark Street. The company plans to purchase a vacant, 4,260-square-foot commercial building at 78 Chilmark Street for \$333,000. Chilmark Street Realty, LLC and Cryogenic Institute will then invest more than \$200,000 in building renovations and equipment. This move will enable the company to keep their operations in Worcester, increase their square footage from 2,200 to 4,260, retain seven (7) employees, and create a minimum of two, new full-time positions.

College of Holy Cross – Construction of Science Building and New Dormitory

As part of our ongoing neighborhood relations effort, the College continues to work with the City on identifying opportunities to strengthen the neighborhood including additional housing for students. The College broke ground to construct a new dormitory building with 39 student suites (156 bedrooms), one staff apartment, and associated parking. The 58,000-square-foot building and site design will incorporate technology and techniques in order to achieve LEED Certification from the U.S. Green Building Counsel.

In addition, the College opened a new \$64 million integrated science complex, which involved the construction of a new addition to Haberman Hall containing 47,000-square feet of area for laboratories, classrooms and offices.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute – Construction of Recreation Center

WPI broke ground on a \$52 million project to construct a 146,000 square foot recreation center near the center of the campus. The College, which was the second tax-exempt institution to provide a P.I.L.O.T to the City, also opened its current recreation center to the City's youth for the Summer 2010 Wheels to Water Program. It is anticipated that this new, state-of-the-art facility will be available to the City's youth upon completion.

Storefront/Façade Improvement Program

The City assisted 18 business and property owners through its Façade & Awning Incentive Grant Program and Storefront Improvement Grant Program. The projects total an estimated public investment of \$305,000 and an estimated private investment of \$480,000. Projects involve the rehabilitation of underutilized and/or dilapidated properties in the five Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas, Downtown, Canal District, and Quinsigamond Village. Since 2009, six projects have been completed, including 100 Water Street, 64 Millbury Street, 38 and 232 Chandler Street, 267 Lincoln Street, and 184 Main Street. There are currently three properties under construction:

150 Chandler Street, 271 Grafton Street, and 52 Millbury Street. Numerous other stakeholders have expressed interest and are also expected participate in these programs.

Neighborhood and Housing Development

Neighborhood Revitalization Efforts In Context of National Foreclosure Crisis – Neighborhood Stabilization Program

In September, the City launched a strategic 18-month plan to stimulate private market investment in neighborhoods deeply impacted by the national housing crisis. The \$12 million effort focused on the impacts of predatory lending practices that resulted in an increased number of mortgage delinquencies and foreclosures, vacant and abandoned properties. Utilizing technology, the City's Property Review Team (PRT) compiled data on foreclosed homes and property complaints in order to identify the most vulnerable neighborhoods for targeting resources; the Main South, Piedmont and Chandler Street areas were identified.

Through the efforts of the Housing Division, the City successfully encumbered \$4.8 million in Federal funds (NSP 1), resulting in the rehabilitation of 67 previously vacant and/or foreclosed housing units in the targeted areas.

<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Amount NSP Funds</u>
5 Quincy Street	95,000.00
114 Austin Street	20,000.00
189 Beacon Street	60,000.00
25 Preston Street	180,000.00
9 Lagrange Street	120,000.00
23 Wyman Street	180,000.00
65 Providence Street	125,000.00
67 Southgate Street*	60,000.00
5 Preston St	130,000.00
15 Kilby Street	180,000.00
5 May St	400,000.00
43 Gates St	77,000.00
140 Grand St. (Southgate Place)	300,000.00
58 Ames	90,000.00
14 Benefit Terrace	180,000.00
4 Russell	52,690.00
71 Hollis St.	80,000.00
18 Kingsbury	120,000.00
161 Austin St	120,000.00
11 Bancroft	112,750.00
4 Ashton Street	35,000.00

Demolition of Public Safety Threats/ Nuisances in Neighborhoods

As part of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, approximately \$400,000 was set-aside to address vacant, chronic problem properties that posed a public safety hazard or were an impediment to private market investment within the three identified areas. Ten properties were identified and demolition has begun (see below).

<u>Demolished Properties</u>
62 Arlington Street
10 Windsor Street
182 Grand Street
197 Grand Street
6 Claremont Street

In addition, the City successfully secured an additional \$1.7 million in NSP (1) funds from the Commonwealth for the demolition of 95 Grand Street and the rehabilitation of the thirteen unit property located at 5 May Street.

Lead Hazard Abatement Program

The stabilization and revitalization efforts were furthered by the City's successful Lead Abatement Grant Program – now considered a model program. In addition to the 50 properties de-leaded this year, the City successfully secured an additional \$6 million to address 400 residential units.

Ending Homelessness

As part of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, the City has been working in partnership with the Commonwealth and providers on a three-year plan to end homelessness. Significant strides have been made in the last year to move away from the failed model of emergency sheltering. Instead, all of the partners at the table are working toward the implementation of the Housing First model with wrap-around services.

As part of the effort, a key priority is the de-commissioning of the People in Peril (PIP) Shelter and the implementation of an assessment and triage center for unaccompanied homeless individuals in Worcester. In January, our efforts showed a 38% reduction (point-in-time survey) in the number of chronically homeless individuals throughout the city, when compared to last year. The PIP Shelter is now operating as a closed-referral system, an important milestone in our effort to decommission the PIP Shelter. Since November 2009, 99 homeless individuals have been placed in appropriate housing in Worcester and in neighboring communities. Between April 2009 and April 2010, the average daily census of the PIP Shelter has been reduced by 23%.

It is anticipated that the PIP Shelter will close by the end of this summer. We are working with the Commonwealth to finalize the necessary funding for the purchase and the construction of a triage and assessment center.

Homeownership – Buy Worcester Now

The Buy Worcester Now Program continues to assist potential homebuyers by matching them with local realtors and the best and most responsible mortgage products for buying a home today. To date, we have closed on 418 homes; nearly half of which are first-time homebuyers. We have successfully trained and certified 25 local real estate professionals in HUD financing and local housing assistance program. We have assisted 23 homeowners with down payment and closing costs in securing first time homebuyer purchases through the American Dream Down Payment Assistance Initiative. In addition, participating employers continue to offer incentives to their employees to purchase a home in Worcester. For example, 22 employees of the Hanover Insurance Group have received assistance (\$5,000) from their employer on the purchase of their home.

ADDI Assisted Properties

18 Florence Street
5 Hollywood Street
32A Timrod Drive
85 Harrison Street
2 Quincy Street, Unit F
83 Harrison Street
87 Harrison Street
1182 Grafton Street
89 Harrison Street
35 Camelot Drive
2 Hollis Street
22 Catharine Street
10 Hooper Street
30 Orne Street
119 Eastern Avenue
19 Westborough Street
10 A Kilby Street
10 Winston Street
14 Burton Court
1 Hatfield Street #4
189 Beacon Street
7 South Buffam Street
52 Birch Sreet

Market-Rate Housing Development

Mayo Group

Mayo Group, a residential and commercial real estate firm based in Boston, continues the development of its properties adjacent to Worcester Common with the construction of up to 70 new units of housing at the former Bancroft Motors property on Portland Street. These new units will join the hundreds of new apartments that Mayo Group has developed at the Bancroft Residences and in the area. In addition, Mayo Group is developing ground-floor retail opportunities along Portland Street to include a range of opportunities serving residents and visitors alike.

Gateway Park

The City reached an agreement with Acorn Management Co., the development arm of Riccardi Group, for the purchase of the former Vocation School – Building A – and the redevelopment into 29 market-rate residential units.

Mixed-Income Housing Development

Gateway Park

The former Worcester Vocational High School – Buildings B&C – were purchased by New Garden Park, Inc., a subsidiary of the Worcester Business Development Corporation for a 66-unit mixed-income residential development.

Canal Lofts

The former Chevalier Furniture Building was purchased by Winn Development for a 60-unit mixed income residential development. Construction is scheduled to begin in

summer 2010. The completed project will result in 30 affordable housing units and 30 market rate units.

Affordable Housing Development

Southgate Place

The former City Builder's Lot collaboratively owned between the South Worcester Neighborhood Improvement Corporation and a group of private developers known as City Builders, LLC broke ground and construction has begun. Phase I is scheduled to be completed in November 2010. The completed project will result in 25 units of affordable housing available to individuals and families with incomes not exceeding 50% of area median income.

HOME Affordable Housing Development

In addition, the City awarded \$2.5 Million in federal HOME funds to assist in the redevelopment of 117 affordable housing units.

HOME Assisted Property	Amount of HOME Funds
140 Eastern Ave	\$ 150,000
67 Catherine Street	\$ 120,000
9 Merrick Street	\$ 40,000
Homes for Union Hill	\$ 120,000
9 May Street	\$ 360,000
140 Grand Street (Southgate Place)	\$ 400,000.
Canal Lofts	\$ 750,000
315 Cambridge Street	\$ 150,000
67 Windsor Street	\$ 400,000

Brownfields Redevelopment

South Worcester Industrial Park (SWIP)

Progress continues at SWIP to create pad-ready parcels for manufacturing use that will be marketed and sold/leased as they become available. Demolition of the 17 Southgate Place and 25 Southgate Street buildings occurred in 2009. Currently environmental assessments are scheduled to start at all the SWIP sites.

Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program

The Economic Development Division provided a \$30,000 grant to Worcester Common Ground for 48 Mason Street, a \$533,000 loan to the Main South Community Development Corporation for 93 Grand Street, and a \$94,000 grant to the Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts for 13 Hope Avenue.

Achieved Green Communities Designation

As part of our ongoing climate action initiatives and in accordance with the State's Green Community Act, the City pursued and successfully achieved designation as a

“Green Community.” This designation sets us apart as a leader in energy conservation and efficiency, green public policy, and makes us more competitive for new State and Federal grants and potential foundation resources. We will also be eligible to apply for up to one million dollars (\$1M) in grants annually.

Infrastructure Improvements

Streets and Sidewalks

Our efforts to invest more than \$10.4 M in infrastructure repair resulted in 11.48 miles of street resurfaced and 11.21 of sidewalk miles resurfaced.

New North High

Construction is underway at the new North High School and is on schedule for a September 2011 opening. The design of this 200,000- square-foot facility was completed and all elements were bid and awarded. The new building was designed with durability and ease of maintenance in mind, along with “Green Elements” that will minimize energy consumption. Based on this design the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative awarded the City \$375,000 in design and construction grants to be used for Photovoltaic power.

After the new school is occupied in 2011 the remaining two (2) phases of construction will begin. These phases include demolition of the existing school and construction of new fields and parking areas. It is projected that the completed project will be within the \$72.8 million dollar budget.

Quinsigamond Village Improvements

In Fiscal Year 2010, the City rehabilitated and enhanced a section of Greenwood St., from Blackstone River Road to Wiser Avenue. The work was done in coordination with the MassDOT enhancement project on Blackstone River Road.

DPW&P improved the riding surface along the 1,300 foot section of roadway, adjusted the granite curb to allow wider traffic lanes, and improved the walking surfaces for able-bodied, and handicapped users. Additionally, the old aluminum light poles were replaced with ‘period’ style lighting to improve the light levels and to enhance the aesthetics in the neighborhood.

Greenwood Street Landfill Project

The recapping of the first of three stages of the Greenwood Street Landfill was begun this spring. The capping is being done in stages to comply with the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries & Wildlife Permit for the protection of the threatened grasshopper sparrow species. A twelve (12) acre portion of the top is being capped with a standard flexible membrane liner (FML) in conformance with Mass DEP Solid Waste Management Regulations. The capping of this stage should be completed by late June 2010. While capping is occurring, shaping and grading materials are still being accepted to remediate the last two stages of the landfill.

DCU Center

The City completed the installation of a new ice rink refrigeration system as well as new hockey boards and glass. The system debuted on the opening night of the 2009-2010 Worcester Sharks Season. Additionally, we continue to upgrade the electrical system of the facility to include larger capacity and placement on a more reliable system. It is anticipated this project will be completed during the summer of 2010. In cooperation with the SMG (Facility Management Company) the City is in the process of replacing all carpeted areas of the facility with a new design only for the DCU Center. It is expected that this project will be completed during the summer of 2010.

Management Efficiencies and Improvements

Reorganization and Consolidation of City Departments; and Management Efficiencies and Technologies

Fire Prevention/ Inspectional Services: The Fire Prevention Division enforces fire codes and ordinances, administers permits and licenses and conducts building inspections. In our ongoing efforts to create a customer-friendly, “one-stop shop” permitting process, the Fire Prevention Division and Inspectional Services Division will now housed under one roof (at Meade Street) in July. This move will allow for the operation of one “point-of-sale” service desk for customers, shared administrative services for permits and licenses issuances, and cross-training of inspectors (both civilian and fire) to eliminate the need for multiple inspections at one site, and ultimately, to ensure that as many uniformed personnel as possible are on apparatus.

To that end, I am exploring permitting software that would tie all permitting functions into one technology application from intake to inspection to resolution/completion. This would reduce permitting time, improve record keeping, enhance interdepartmental communication and customer service, and improve staff efficiency and resource management.

Inspectional Services: In areas where certification or special training is not mandated, we are cross-training sanitary inspectors in State Sanitary Code for Food Protection, Water Quality and Housing Sanitation in order to fill in gaps when staffing levels are not adequate. This allows for interdivisional support as well during the ebbs and flows of peak service times.

Administration & Finance: Several of the divisions within A&F – Treasurer’s Office, Purchasing and Budget – consolidated work space within City Hall in an effort to share overhead resources. The next phase of this effort will include new technology and updated technology solutions to streamline the assessing function (digital photographs for property cards and automated updates), as well updates to the financial management system, which includes serves and switches that we now own and maintain.

In these lean fiscal times, the City continues to engage community partners. In Fiscal Year 2010, for example, the City forged a partnership with UMass Memorial Health Care to house EMS services in a former city-owned firehouse (Providence Street Fire Station) and to provide nursing support during H1N1 public clinics.

Delivery of Core Municipal Services

Public Safety

Worcester Police Department

In spite of significant budget cuts and a top-to-bottom reorganization that reduced the total compliment of officers by 63 and consolidated a number of divisions, the Worcester Police Department (WPD) continues to deliver exceptional public services and continues to keep our City safe.

The Chief has worked hard to continue important and critical community policing programs and community partnerships. The department, through grant funding, was able to continue six existing programs:

- **Gang Camp** – Members of the Gang Unit held their 6th successful Gang Camp for over 280 at-risk youth
- **Project Night Light** – Successfully conducted over 262 home visits in the first quarter; 32 warrant arrest were made, and 12 Shannon program referrals
- **Project Night Light II** (focuses on juvenile probationers) – In the first quarter, the WPD successfully made over 131 Juvenile home visits, 1 probation violation, 2 probationers were referred to Shannon programs.
- **School Liaison Program** – Working cooperatively with the Worcester Public Schools, the Worcester Police Gang Unit visited and talked at 37 Public Elementary schools and services 85 6th grade classes, approximately 2560 students.
- **Final Notice** – Twelve entered in program, 5 referred to GED, 7 referred to jobs training.
- **Worcester Youth Center and Lifeline Program** – provides GED and pre-GED; 38 youth received one on one case management, 8 are in GED programs.
- **Police/ Clergy Mentoring Program** – Partnered with 11 congregations throughout the city.

The department continues to work with the Grants Office to identify opportunities for public safety initiative grants. The following grants were secured as a result:

- Governor's Highway Safety Traffic Enforcement – \$110,000
- Executive Office of Public Safety Shannon Grant – \$310,000
- State Stimulus funds for retention of 24 police officers –\$1,961,075
- Federal Byrne/JAG – \$192,406
- ADAPT Grant to Encourage Arrest to Reduce Domestic Violence - \$400,000 (pending)
- Coverdell crime lab equipment grant (pending)

The Chief continued the partnerships between the police, city departments, and the community. Through these partnerships and working collaboratively to address the issues of crime, fear of crime, physical and social disorder, and neighborhood decay the quality of community life can be improved. These activities included: Two Neighborhood Watch Summit (150+ neighborhood and community leaders in attendance at each meeting to discuss neighborhood needs); and the continuation of Crime Watch Group participation.

In addition, we continued programs to address violence through the use of increased enforcement activities in the areas surrounding and including problem bars; and Continued Problem Property Task Force with one Sergeant, and 1 Police Officer working with crime analysis, Health and Human Services, Fire Department to identify and address problem properties. We continued ASAP – (Awareness, Support, Assistance Partnership) community involvement piece of the Street Violence Protection Group Initiative; and expanded the 6th Annual Youth Summit to provide youth with opportunities for summer employment and recreation. Lastly, officers were assigned to work directly with the following federal agencies: FBI; DEA; and US Marshall Service.

The department continues to rely on weekly Captain's Round Table crime meetings with Chief, Deputy Chiefs, Captains and Investigative Lieutenants to include patrol command staff to share information. Analysis software was upgraded; and street intelligence and cooperative strategies continue, as well as the administrative overview of all non-fatal shootings and homicides and identification of impact areas, strategies and results.

Other notable administrative achievements included:

- Expanded weekly overtime meetings with command staff to keep a monitor overtime trends and expenditures and started tracking 48 different categories of overtime spending
- Enhanced court overtime review and analysis has reduced court overtime spending by 38% since July of 2008.
- Continued Risk Management Command Group to assess current policies and develop policies that are based on best practice with the goal of reducing exposure to civil liability; and
- Reduced number of employees on long term IOD by 50%

Worcester Fire Department

The Worcester Fire Department (WFD) maintained the average response time to all emergency incidents at 4 minutes, 40 seconds; and provided 16 firefighters to the scene of a fire within 8 minutes of dispatch 93.4% of the time. WFD performed 1,971 in-service inspections; issued nearly 6,600 permits and 700 licenses; and conducted approximately 8,600 code enforcement inspections. The WFD investigated and resolved 1,700 citizen complaints; investigated cause and origin for over 200 structure fires; and referred 16 adolescents to the Juvenile Fire-setters program. WFD also reviewed nearly 850 fire alarm and suppression plans for buildings being renovated or erected in the city.

The personnel reductions have had a significant impact on the department – and the WFD has had to close at least one company 151 times over the course of the fiscal year. The department successfully overcame these closings and managed to provide a level of fire protection to the citizens of Worcester that, for the most part, met national standards.

WFD Public Education

Through the efforts of the Chief, the department continues to proactively educate residents on fire prevention. The department conducted nearly 650 educational experiences for the citizens of Worcester; focusing on those populations most at risk for injury or death due to fire, children and elderly. In addition, the WFD acquired, through

the aggressive utilization of grant sources, over \$20,000 in fire educational props and materials.

We instituted a landmark partnership with the Worcester Public Schools, instituting a progressive fire safety educational component into the 3rd grade curriculum and brought entry level fire prevention and education programs to all 40+ Head Start classrooms in the City.

Ninety-three (93) firefighters attended training sessions (automatic defibrillator training, hazardous materials training, and training in the use of positive pressure ventilation). These professional development trainings are necessary for the safe and efficient discharge of their duties.

The Worcester Fire Department Hazardous Material Technician assigned to Emergency Management completed inspection and enforcement of over 95 SARA properties dealing with utilization and storage of Hazardous Materials in fixed facilities within the city. He completed a yearly table-top exercise for the local hazardous materials facilities, evaluating the response readiness of first responder agencies and facilities and personnel. In conjunction with line personnel he also inspected, completed and marked over a dozen “dangerous” vacant buildings with corresponding floor plans and pictorial documentation.

Other notable accomplishments included a completed comprehensive review of the permitting and licensing administrative procedures including a subsequent review of the fee structure. This resulted in a change to the fee structure and when adopted should realize over \$100,000 in new revenue to the City.

In addition, we initiated and completed a long-awaited billing procedure for fire alarm service and false-alarm billing procedures. A program for identifying and tracking sprinkler systems and their current status was developed and instituted, as well as a program for identifying and tracking commercial alarm systems and their current status.

Inspectional Services

The Housing and Health Inspections Division performed more than 20,000 separate actions in accordance with all City, State and Federal regulations to enforce a wide range of public health and environmental regulations. The proactive measures and technologies in place – including the Property Analysis Database, the bi-weekly Property Review Team, Nuisance Inspectors, and Neighborhood Sweeps – resulted in improved tracking, monitoring and reporting of properties, and a faster response to resolution. Approximately 8,000 housing inspections were conducted, resulting in 18,000 cited violations and requiring 13,000 follow-up inspections. Of these inspections, approximately 80% were resolved within 30 days; 90% within 60 days, and 95% within 90 day (remaining 5% involved in court actions).

Property Review Team

The Property Review Team (PRT) conducted six (6) Neighborhood Impact Sweeps and inspected more than 400 properties (inclusive of the census track areas associated with Neighborhood Stabilization Program). These sweeps generated more than 800 violations and within three months of each sweep, 100% compliance was achieved.

Receivership Program

The Receivership Program resulted in four (4) properties having court appointed receivers assigned by the Worcester Housing Court stabilizing eleven (11) families in their homes. A total of 191 families have been able to stay in their homes through the program since 2008. These properties were stabilized in the short term through interdepartmental coordination (PRT) and proactive enforcement, in anticipation of the development of long term property management and ownership options.

In addition, the division referred a record number of building and housing code cases to the Law Department for court action and achieved overwhelming success in Housing Court using fines, contempt and imprisonments to prosecute a record number of building and code cases. Court levied fines collected this year total approximately \$65,000. These monies are deposited in a revolving account for on-going enforcement activities.

The Housing and Health Inspections Division is also responsible for inspections of food service establishments, body art and body art establishments; 3,200 were inspected last year. In partnership with the Department of Public Works and Parks, the division worked with food service establishments to bring them into compliance with the new Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Regulations. Ninety-nine (99%) percent of our food service establishments are now compliant. Additionally, 5,000 air and water quality samplings were conducted and 1,800 weight and measure inspections.

The Building and Zoning Division issued more than 10,000 building, plumbing, wiring and gas permits and conducted the required inspections of each. Approximately 2,350 building permits were reviewed and issued for both residential and commercial construction. These permits alone account for \$106 million dollars in estimated cost of construction reinvested back into our community.

WFD and DIS inspectors inspected over 300 nightclubs and bars to ensure compliance with codes, laws and regulations of both departments.

Public Health

H1N1 – Public Health Threat

We successfully coordinated all resources and personnel to help mitigate the spread of the H1 N1 virus in our community. The Division of Public Health with the support and assistance of the Division of Emergency Management and many other health care partners, coordinated more than 160 influenza clinics while administering more than 14,670 H1N1 vaccines and 2,641 seasonal flu vaccines. As part of this effort, the City purchased and stockpiled necessary personal protective equipment for the City's first responders during the declared H1N1 influenza pandemic.

Creating a 21st Century Public Health Model

We engaged significant community health care partners in an effort to redefine the mission, vision, capabilities and services. The Task Force recommendations identified strategic goals to pursue, including the reconstitution of the Board of Health, the concept of regionalization, and significant partnerships/ collaborations. As part of this

effort, the UMass Medical School agreed to partner with the City to conduct the first of anticipated regular health status indicator reports on behalf of the City.

Youth Opportunities Office

Youth Employment

Youth Employment increased from 1,526 in 2008 to 1,769 in 2009. Through the Youth Opportunities Office, we leveraged more than \$2.5 million in funding and completed the Three-Year Agenda for Youth. Additionally, the Youth Opportunities Office worked with the Worcester Public Schools to coordinate the Annual Health Career Expo; the event drew more than 448 students and provided information about the many careers in the health care industry.

Youth Recreation

In collaboration with many community partners, we developed and successfully implemented a summer aquatics program for our City's youth, all in the context of a deep economic recession and the closure of antiquated and unsafe City public pools. All told, the success of the *Wheels to Water Program* resulted in 5,700 visits to participating pool facilities and City beaches over a six-week period. Even more compelling, more than 750 young people received swimming lessons and safety instruction at the Boys & Girls Club and the City's public beaches. The *Wheels to Water Program* also programmed all four pool facilities to open to families and the general public during scheduled times, resulting in nearly 3,000 family visits during these times. More than 2,220 young people took advantage of recreational activities offered at participating pick-up/ drop-off sites. This was in addition to the 8,316 children who were fed lunch at the City beaches and two State-owned pools. The *Wheels to Water Program* also preserved and integrated recreational programs

In light of this success, we have partnered and launched the Summer 2010 *Wheels to Water Program*. This year's program will feature more activities and pools, and increased transportation, including access/ transportation to five (5) private pool facilities, four (4) City beaches, and Greenwood Spray Facility; 12 registration sites (see attached) and 12 drop-off/ pick-up locations across the city; three (3) recreational programs at Beaver Brook Park, Elm Park Community School, and Great Brook Valley (administered by the Boys & Girls Club, Girl's Inc., Girl's Scouts); existing summer educational programming (focused on English, language arts, and mathematics) in partnership with Worcester Public Schools; and summer feeding at drop-off/ pick-up locations and City beaches in partnership with Project Bread/ Friendly House.

Public Works & Parks

Vietnam Veterans Memorial

The City received a grant from the State to upgrade the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Vietnam Veterans Memorial. This grant addressed drainage, electrical and accessibility issues at the Memorial. Design began last fall and substantial completion was reached in May, with only minor finishing touches remaining. This facility was available for the Memorial Day celebration on Monday May 31, 2010.

Vernon Hill Park Project

This renovation project continues to move along and is expected to be completed in the fall of 2010 with use to begin in the spring of 2011. The project includes the complete renovation of the softball field, baseball field, basketball court, parking lot, wall along Providence Street, new sidewalks and drainage upgrades. All facilities will be state of the art and include irrigation, drainage and lighting.

Rockwood Softball Field

This renovation reached substantial completion on April 24, 2010. The field is currently being used by Worcester State Softball, Jesse Burkett Little League, Worcester Little League Challenger division, and the Senior Softball League. The renovations included new bleachers, press box, fencing, field realignment, irrigation, drainage, lights, electrical service and restrooms.

Green Hill Golf Course Club House

The newly renovated club house is now completed and open for business. The multi-functional facility, which can seat up to 75 people in its function room, is a great place for members and guests to relax, socialize, and dine. “The Grill on the Hill” now offers plenty of food choices along with a casual atmosphere. These new club house improvements are expected to increase the demand for more tournaments to the course.

The Golf Course with all its improvements, along with its well maintained greens and fairways, is an asset that everyone can enjoy. Whether you want to experience the great course conditions, enjoy a meal with a beverage, or just take in the view from the new deck, it’s a place that should be visited by all.

Reforestation of Public Street Trees

DPW&P launched its program to replace the 2,300 trees lost to the ALB and the Ice Storm of 2008 with an aggressive reforestation plan. Beginning in the fall of 2009, DPW&P crews along with assistance from DCR and USDA commenced its reforestation effort. Over the next 2 years over 2,400 street trees will be planted to replace lost trees and to re-establish a vibrant and diversified urban forest.

Crompton Park Swimming Pool

In the fall of 2009, DPW&P began the design for a new modern 6500 square foot swimming pool to be located at Crompton Park. The pool, designed with a zero – depth entry, will include spray features, lap lanes and a water slide. The \$2.5 million pool will also include a new bath house and mechanical building. The project is expected to be completed in the Summer of 2010.

New Green Hill Park Access Road

A new, nearly 1,400’ road was constructed to link the Green Hill Golf Course to the remainder of Green Hill Park. This road will allow all visitors to Green Hill Park to access all of its services through Skyline Drive. Access to Park features will also be provided through Green Hill Parkway. After the new road is completed, access to Green Hill Golf

Course will be eliminated. The new access road also provides for a sidewalk for safe pedestrian passage through the Park and a boat launch area where access to the pond can be provided.

Worcester Public Library

The Library was one of only five libraries in Massachusetts to receive a \$7,500 federal Library Services and Technology grant for a program called “Mother Goose on the Loose en Español.” This is an early literacy program for children up to age 3 and featured story times and other events in Spanish for children and their families. The program was launched on February 20 with various events including children from Ritmos Academy presenting a dance program. Staff from the Worcester Family and Community Partnership also was involved. Programs continue through August.

The Great Brook Valley Branch Library received a two-year grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to upgrade public access computing. While that work was being done, the interior of the Branch also received a “makeover. The Branch was thoroughly cleaned and painted, shelves were relocated to better display the collection, and new computer desks were added. These improvements made this space welcome and inviting for the neighborhood’s residents.

Teens have borrowed a record number of books and materials from the Main Library – an increase of 350% over the past five years! While they make use of the computers and enjoy special programs such as Anime films and Manga drawing, it is the increase in the use of books that the staff are most proud.

The Main Library was open 29 Sundays in fiscal year 2010. An average of 850 people visited during the four hours open. The busiest Sunday saw 1,136 people making use of the resources – computers, books, meeting space and, of course, library staff.

The Worcester Public Library Foundation secured funding from the Stoddard Charitable Trust to purchase computer stations specifically designed to assist children ages 4 through 7 with literacy skills. The computers are located at the Main Library and the Frances Perkins Branch.

The Worcester History Librarian was featured in a TV documentary titled “Things That Go Bump in the Night: Tales of Haunted New England” that was shown in Western Massachusetts (PBS station WYBE) last fall.

Legislative Accomplishments

Researched and Developed a Comprehensive Sign Ordinance Amendment Proposal intended to replace the existing sign ordinance in its entirety.

Researched and Developed Small Wind Ordinance Amendment. As a testament to this accomplishment and the City’s responsiveness, the CEO of Deerpath Energy stated “we were able to accomplish in Worcester in three months what took 12 in California. Wal-Mart was the first to utilize the new wind turbine law through its installation of 12 small wind turbines throughout its parking lot this spring.

Researched and Evaluated Energy Efficiency Building “Stretch” Code. The adoption of the building energy stretch code is an effective way to make a significant

community-wide change that will yield environmental benefits and provide an important hedge against energy price increases for buildings constructed to this standard. It also sets the City of Worcester apart as a leader in this area of public policy, and enables the City to apply for additional State grants and makes the City more competitive for other grants from the State and Federal government and foundations.

Researched and Developed a Citywide Housing Strategy based on data, updated market assessments, and new tools through the Gateway Cities Legislative Agenda


Drafted and Advocated for Passage of the Gateway Cities Legislative Agenda for new incentives to attract new industry, to retain and expand local jobs, to create market-rate housing and to foster economic vitality.

Researched and Developed an Updated Tobacco Control Ordinance that was last changed in 1996. Since that time, a statewide workplace smoking ban has gone into effect, new tobacco products have emerged, and new smoking establishments (e.g., hookah bars) have opened. The proposed amendments before you address these issues, in addition to other community concerns brought before the Worcester Board of Health.

Census 2010 - Outreach Campaign. Developed and implemented a comprehensive outreach campaign to reach traditionally undercounted ethnic and minority groups, college students and the general public to help ensure that the 2010 Census.

These are highlights of accomplishments across the spectrum of all the services we proudly provide to this community. There is so much more that is done day in and day out, 24/7 and all 365 days of the fiscal year, often unseen and unheralded. Examples such as DPW staff deployed in the middle of the night in driving rainstorms in deep trenches, making repairs broken water pipes; Staff within Planning and Regulatory Services working late into the evening, well past the end of our workday, to prepare the agendas and filings for our regulatory boards; our public safety officers placing their lives on the line daily – placing their personal health and safety second to ours; and the list goes on and on. There is a incredible body of work addressed by a dedicated group of public servants that I am very proud to serve with and to lead. I am humbled and grateful to be in my seventh year as your City Manager and I look forward to the successes in our best days that lie ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael V. O'Brien', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael V. O'Brien
City Manager